

	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order 202-534B	
	NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE January 09, 2017	EFFECTIVE DATE January 09, 2017
	SUBJECT      Commuted Subsistence Allowances		

### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this order is to delegate authority and to detail the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) policy and procedure for the payment of commuted subsistence allowances to wage marine employees aboard NOAA ships.

### **SECTION 2. SCOPE.**

Per Title 5 of the United States Code (U.S.C.), the pay of wage marine employees is fixed and adjusted in accordance with prevailing rates and practices in the maritime industry as nearly as is consistent with the public interest. (5 U.S.C. § 5348 (a)). In keeping with this concept, meals and lodging, or cash in lieu thereof, are provided to ship employees in accordance with the rates and practices determined to be current in the industry. General schedule, Commerce Alternative Pay System (CAPS), or wage grade employees aboard NOAA ships are entitled to appropriate allowances as determined by the NOAA "Travel Handbook." NOAA Corps officers will be paid allowances in accordance with Title 37 of U.S. Code, "Pay and Allowances of the Uniformed Services," and therefore are beyond the scope of this order.

### **SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.**

.01 Ship Employees: Employees responsible for operations and/or maintenance of NOAA ships or ship communications, who are not covered by the general schedule, the CAPS, or any wage grade pay system, and who are therefore paid under authority of 5 U.S.C. § 5348. Uniformed service members, including officers in the NOAA Commissioned Corps, are not ship employees for the purpose of this order.

.02 Commuted subsistence allowances: Meals and lodging, or cash in lieu thereof, payable to ship employees in accordance with rates and conditions current in the maritime industry.

### **SECTION 4. POLICY.**

.01 When suitable temporary government lodging and dining facilities are not available aboard ships or on shore, wage marine employees who are assigned to full operational status to the ship's complement will receive a daily commuted subsistence allowance on a seven-day week basis. The allowance for meals shall be paid at the rate specified in applicable union agreement or negotiated amendment for each meal with breakfast, lunch, and dinner equaling one day. Lodging allowance shall be paid in units of full days when the commanding officer is unable to

arrange other suitable lodging, making it necessary for the employee to be placed in lodging ashore.

.02 The purpose of the commuted subsistence allowance is to defray an unusual expense incurred by the employee. Therefore, if an expense is not incurred, payment shall not be made. In no case should the employee benefit financially as a result of a commuted subsistence allowance. Thus, NOAA should provide a commuted subsistence allowance only where appropriate.

- a. When government lodging is not made available, an employee who maintains a residence for his or her dependents at his or her assigned port will not be entitled to the lodging allowance and will only be entitled to an allowance for those meals normally eaten aboard the ship.
- b. While in port, payment of the commuted subsistence allowance, or the provision of lodging and meals, will only be made to an employee who would have been at the location of the ship to take advantage of government-furnished rooms and/or meals. If an employee does not normally sleep and/or eat aboard ship during off duty hours, he or she will not be entitled to commuted subsistence allowance or to lodging allowance and/or meals.

.03 Commuted subsistence allowances will be authorized on NOAA Form 34-25, "Commuted Subsistence Voucher," at the rate specified within the applicable union agreement. Detailed instructions for preparation of this form are printed on the reverse side of the form. If space on the form is not adequate for the number of employees to be listed, NOAA Form 34-25A, "Commuted Subsistence Voucher - Continuation Sheet," may be used. This form should be prepared in original with two copies. One copy should be retained by the authorizing official for his or her records, one copy should be given to the cashier for purposes of paying the employee(s), and the original should be submitted to the NOAA Finance Office Accounting Operations Division for reimbursement of the cashier fund.

.04 Commuted subsistence rates for bargaining unit employees, effective May 2, 2011:

- a. In lieu of breakfast = \$6.00
- b. In lieu of lunch = \$12.00
- c. In lieu of supper = \$20.00
- d. Room allowance = \$40.00 (Provided the ship is declared uninhabitable)

The above rates may be adjusted upward, not to exceed the applicable per diem rate specified by the U.S. General Services Administration and located at

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>, when comparable meals or lodging are not available at the lower rate and appropriate receipts are furnished. Meal breakdown rates for locations outside the continental U.S. are located at

<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/perdiemCalc.cfm>.

## **SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

.01 The authority to grant payment for commuted subsistence allowances within established

regulations has been delegated to the Director of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) and the Deputy Director for Operations of OMAO in Delegation of Authority (DoA) Transmittal Number 86. The OMAO Deputy Director for Operations may delegate authority to the Director of Marine Operations. The Director of Marine Operations may delegate authority to the commanding officers of NOAA ships and to officials at the Marine Centers. The redelegation of authority must be made in writing with copies forwarded to the Director of OMAO and Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (OCAO).

## **SECTION 6. REFERENCES.**

.01 "Collective Bargaining Agreement Between NOAA OMAO and District No. 1 – PCD, MEBA (AFL-CIO)", December 23, 2015.

.02 "Agreement Between National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of NOAA Corps Operations, Atlantic and Pacific Marine Centers and International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, ILA (AFL-CIO)", October 22, 1998.

.03 "Negotiated Agreement Between National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Marine Operations Center and Seafarers International Union (SIU), Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District/National Maritime Union (AFL-CIO)", May 2, 2011.

.04 Delegation of Authority (Transmittal Number 86) from the NOAA, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere to "The Director of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations and the Deputy Director for Operations, OMAO, is delegated the authority to provide NOAA policy and procedures for the payment of commuted subsistence allowances for NOAA vessel employees", July 30, 2014.

## **SECTION 7. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.**

.01 The NOAA Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) signs because OMAO does have a delegation of authority for the NAO.

.02 This order supersedes NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-534A, dated February 4, 1991.

An electronic copy of this order will be posted on the NOAA Office of the Chief Administrative Officer website under the NOAA Administrative Issuances Section.

<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~ocao/index.html>



Chief Administrative Officer

Office of Primary Interest:  
Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)